

# Introduction

## Information Included

This publication contains information on City of Saint Paul budgets, that is, the operating budgets and debt service budgets. Operating budgets include the general fund and 50 special funds. The capital improvement budget (CIB) is included in a separate document. The Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), Water Utility, RiverCentre, Library agency, and Port Authority budgets are not included because they are separate entities.

## Purpose

The goal of this report is to provide taxpayers with an easy-to-use guide to city spending. We have tried to answer the question, “Where does the money go?” by providing tables and graphs to display this information. As a staff, we always struggle with what level of detail to show. If we show too little detail, our publications will not answer the questions people most commonly ask. If we show too much detail, the budget documents become extremely large and expensive to print. Pouring through them can be daunting, tedious and time consuming.

We hope that this summary will help make taxpayers aware of where the city’s resources come from and where they go. By looking at the information, we hope they will see how state revenues and decisions on property tax classification affect local property taxes. They will understand better how the property tax base affects property taxes. And they will see how difficult it is for decision makers to make cuts in the budget without including some of the services taxpayers tell us they hold most dear, such as police, fire, libraries and parks. These services are such a large portion of the budget, they are difficult to ignore. We believe heightened taxpayer awareness of city programs will increase the quality of public debates on spending and taxes and, ultimately, the quality of public policy.

## Budgets, Not Spending

Unless otherwise noted, the numbers in this document are *budget* amounts, not actual spending. Actual spending amounts for past years can be found in a publication called the “Comprehensive Annual Financial Report” (see information following).

## Other Publications and Information

The Office of Financial Services (OFS) publishes other documents. Each year we publish this summary document to display the council-adopted budgets. Detailed proposed budget information, at the activity and line item level, is also available. However, to keep printing costs down, it is only available on a limited-distribution basis. OFS also publishes a brochure which contains budget data and demographic information. As time permits, we update a statistical summary with trend information over longer periods of time. These publications are available for viewing in Saint Paul Public Libraries, Government Documents Section, or by calling the Office of Financial Services at 651-266-8797. Our website is [www.ci.stpaul.mn.us](http://www.ci.stpaul.mn.us). Some budget documents are available on this web site.

Other publications are listed below. Most of them are also available in Saint Paul Public Libraries. We encourage you to use library copies whenever possible to obtain information, but if you cannot, we have listed publications and contact persons for you.

- “Capital Allocation Policy.”  
Contact Allen Lovejoy at 651-266-6576.
- “Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.”  
Contact Lori Lee at 651-266-8822 or Jose Jovellana at 651-266-8820
- “General Obligation Debt Overlapping on the Saint Paul Tax Base: Five Year Debt Management Strategy, 2001-2005.”  
Contact Todd Hurley at 651-266-8837.
- Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) annual budget and the “Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.”  
Contact Tom Meyer at 651-266-6667.
- Port Authority financial statements and the report of independent public accountants.  
Contact Tom Collins at 651-224-5686.
- Regional Water Services.  
Contact Ruth O’Brien at 651-266-6322.
- RiverCentre  
Contact Bill Huepenbecker at 651-265-4822.